596 of the structure, function, and attitudes of the traditional family. Second, consideration must be given to the incidence and nature of change in the family preceding the Communist regime. Only then can intelligent consideration be given to the family under the Central People's Government. Finally, attention will be devoted to the unique factors that characterize the family in Southwest China.

## II. THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY

594 The term "family" in China has been
596 most usefully defined as "a unit consisting of
565 members related to each other by blood, marriage,
183 or adoption and having a common budget and common property."[2] Three main types of family structure have been distinguished -- the conjugal, the stem, and the joint forms. The joint family, consisting of several married brothers, their wives, children, and sometimes one or both parents, was the ideal family of China. It was typical only of the gentry and well-to-do merchant classes. The conjugal family, consisting of a man, his wife, and unmarried children, and the stem family, consisting of the conjugal family plus one married son with his wife and children, were most typical of the peasant, artisan, and small merchant class. For all classes, however, the joint family was the ideal to be achieved if an improvement in family circumstances permitted.[3]

2. Olga Lang, Chinese Family and Society, New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press, 1946, p. 13. Cf. Levy, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

3. Ibid., pp. 13-16. Cf. Levy, op. cit., pp. 42-60.